

service men and women, and the sacrifices of their families. If we were to ask any military commander present at those ceremonies, What is the most important aspect of leadership? The answer would be: First, take care of the troops.

This bill provides an opportunity for the House to exhibit that kind of leadership, the opportunity to take care of our troops. Instead, sadly, it is another missed opportunity.

If military quality of life issues were a priority, we would not be considering a Military Construction Appropriations Bill that is \$1.5 billion below last year's funding level, but we would be passing Mr. OBEY's amendment, which would help nearly 8,000 service members and their families get the housing they deserve.

Instead, we pass resolutions that talk about supporting the military and then refuse to provide that support in the appropriations bills.

Active and retired military personnel and their families have been among the victims of the irresponsible and fiscally unsound budget and tax policies of the Republican majority. If putting the troops and their families first were a Republican priority, they would not have submitted a budget that continues the tax on disabled veterans, that cuts veterans benefits, and that impacts aid. And they would not have approved a tax cut that takes care of the children of the wealthy few while ignoring 250,000 children of active duty military personnel.

That is a regrettable message to send to the troops just days before the Fourth of July.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2003

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to oppose H.R. 1, the Republican Medicare bill.

Tonight we have an opportunity to provide seniors with a Medicare prescription medicine benefit. But the Republican Majority has thrown aside bipartisanship and crafted a bill that will confuse and short-change seniors while slowly eroding the time-honored guarantee of Medicare. I cannot vote for this seriously flawed bill.

Seniors in North Carolina's Second District, like those across the country, deserve a real Medicare prescription medicine benefit. They want a plan that is simple, comprehensive, and a part of Medicare. I have consistently voted for such a plan throughout my career in Congress.

But H.R. 1 subjects seniors to a complex plan that features fluctuating premiums, a huge gap in coverage, uncertainty about who's going to provide them with medicines, and it will end Medicare as we know it.

First, nothing in this legislation requires the drug-only insurance groups that will administer this plan to fix premiums at \$35 a month. That number is merely a suggestion. Our seniors do not want suggestions Mr. Speaker, they want certainty.

Second, the \$400 billion the Majority set aside for Medicare related spending in their Fiscal Year 2004 is woefully inadequate. This

plan will only cover a fifth of what seniors will spend over the next 10 years on prescription medicines. To fit inside their budget, the authors of this bill have developed a huge gap, or doughnut hole, that forces seniors who spend between \$2,001 and \$3,500 on medicines to pay all of their costs. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

Third, this plan relies on an untested mechanism to deliver medicines to seniors. H.R. 1 creates a drug-only insurance market that will not work, especially in rural areas. But what makes this bill worse is that it makes no effort to provide a fallback for rural seniors should private drug-only plans decide to stop offering them coverage.

Finally, in this plan we see the Republican Majority's true colors. H.R. 1 is simply a shell-game that will privatize Medicare. Under this legislation, in 2010 private plans will be allowed to compete against Medicare to cover hospital and physician benefits. As private plans seek to siphon off healthy seniors, the cost of remaining in traditional Medicare will rise and seniors will be forced to join an HMO, along with all of its restrictions, to get coverage.

When President Lyndon Johnson signed Medicare into law over 38 years ago, Medicare was designed to be a guarantee that our seniors would be able to get affordable health care services regardless of their age, ability to pay, or degree of sickness. In the spirit of that landmark law, I will vote for an alternative amendment to H.R. 1 that creates a simple, comprehensive, prescription medicine plan under Medicare. This plan also includes superior rural provider provisions in comparison to those contained in H.R. 1.

Mr. Speaker, for the third Congress in a row we have another Medicare bill pending before us. And once again, the bill is a sham. It provides no guaranteed benefit, contains a huge gap in coverage, and it will privatize Medicare.

America's seniors want bipartisan cooperation in this body. They want us to come together to strengthen Medicare, not dismantle it. I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 1 tonight.

CENTRALIA SESQUICENTENNIAL RECOGNITION

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to the City of Centralia, Illinois as she celebrates her sesquicentennial. Since 1853, the people of Centralia have lived and prospered and given so much to this great nation.

Centralia was founded as a result of the building of the Illinois Central Railroad, hence the name Centralia. It was also a coal-mining town almost from the first years of its existence. The town has experienced an oil boom in the mid 1900s and is home to much industry.

Over the years Centralia has produced many leaders who have been instrumental in our Nation's history. One reason is due to the quality education provided. It is also the home of the "Winningest Basketball Team in America," the Centralia Carillon, and the Centralia Balloon Fest; just to name a few.

I am proud to represent the people of the great City of Centralia and to share in this special occasion. I thank them for all they give to our country and I wish them another successful 150 years. Congratulations and "Go Orphans!"

JOHN L. GROVE

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and loss of John L. Grove, whose accomplishments have made an everlasting impact to Pennsylvania and the Nation.

John Grove committed his life to the Franklin County community as a defining model for entrepreneurship and the American dream. Mr. Grove personally had a hand in the creation of numerous successful companies and contributed his expertise and advice to a whole host of other business ventures.

John Grove was noted for his brilliance and huge innovations in the world of hydraulics. He was most notably, the "father" of the hydraulic telescoping crane boom. In addition to his prowess for business and ingenuity, he was also extremely generous to his community. Today his philanthropic endeavors, including the John L. Grove College of Business at Shippensburg University and the John L. Grove Medical Center in Greencastle, stand as a reminder of his faith in those around him and his determination to provide a better life for others.

John Grove and his brother formed Grove Manufacturing Company by building farm wagons out of a two car suburban garage. But brilliance would not be constrained by just farm wagons. In just three short years, he and his brother developed and built the industry's first industrial yard crane. Quickly the wagons were superceded by the demand for the cranes and the small business in a garage became an industrial giant.

After a very successful run in this career, Mr. Grove and his brother sold the company in the 1960's and John Grove took a well-deserved vacation. But as most truly gifted people find out, the body may rest but the brain never pauses. It was in the course of his vacation travels across this great country of ours, that Mr. Grove realized the pitfalls of those who needed to work on platforms and scaffolding. To that end, he invented the self propelled work-basket vehicle and in an instant a second career was born.

In implementing his new vision, Mr. Grove and a partner bought a small factory in McConnellsburg and began with only 15 employees. Soon, JLG Industries would grow to a internationally recognized company that would employ thousands from around the community.

In 1993, Mr. Grove retired from a hugely successful career at JLG, but he continued to offer both his business experience and philanthropy to the area he so dearly loved.

Few people have had such a tremendous impact on south central Pennsylvania. With the passing of John L. Grove, Pennsylvania and America have lost one of their greatest citizens.